POINT

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POINT BOARD MEETING

June 19, 1975

PRESENT: Jan, Louie, Dick (later), Michael, Annie, Fran, Stewart, Andrew F., Andrew M., Pam, Andrea, Jeanne, Diana F.

Gathering began at CQ headquarters for volleyball game while we waited for the latecomers, then we moved to Bob Mitchell's houseboat. Nathan broke a finger and won't be able to make it to the meeting.

Start right off talking about the budget. Michael discusses his projection. He sees COST CUTTING the only way to survive the current crisis; says we have 55,000 capital to "experiment with" and the next two issues to go till we must reduce costs and reach "steady state." The ways costs are cut will determine the direction, rather than vice-versa.

Stewart, and other CQ staff see it the other way around. They have already done about all the cost cutting they intend to do, mainly by lowering staff hours. They see INCREASING SUBSCRIPTIONS as the solution, along with a few other things that will INCREASE VISIBILITY very soon: (The Library Conference and Book Fair, Stewart will be on the Today Show, interviews with Gregory Bateson and Jerry Brown). Plan to focus on the following things:

Making a splash with libraries, convincing them we're a reference book (we're done with being a popular book, but reference status has yet to be achieved. It may take until Spring or longer to do it.)

Advertisements bought in Publisher's Weekly and Library Journal. May buy in others.

Plan to introduce subscription-gift pleas. Already doing direct mail subscription solicitation. Need 20,000 subscriptions to pay for the magazine, then newsstand sales will be gravy.

Penguin will be distributing the Catalog and Epilog in a display carton (two-storied) and will split the cost with us 50/50. Hopefully the CQ will start being displayed along with. (Plan to change to a cover that looks more like a book, raise the price to 2.50)

L.D. Michael's projection is based on not having to pay Penguin 112,000.

A.F. The reserve account with Random House is still not freed up. That's 60,000 which will go toward paying Penguin.

L.D. Asks for staff input. What kind of Board do you think staff needs?

S.B. Rubber stamp.

Chuckles all around

A.M. Seems like WE (Whole Earth) made the money and POINT spent it. (Nods of agreement here and there.)

L.D. Staff ought to be on the Board. Jan is still interested in publishing, and willing to shift gears from giving money away. Perhaps people like Ruth Gottstein or Tom Gerrard might be included. Perhaps we should close the SF office.

F.B. POINT has collected a lot of information, is connected to numerous organizations, is a potential resource and connecting point for a lot of people. Many of the phone calls, letters, etc., that come through can be redirected if the information that is stored in the files and in people's heads could be easily available. Sort of an extension of the ACCESS aspect of the WEC.

All this out on the deck in the wind, getting cold, and hungry. We come inside and Bob Mitchell invites us into his bedroom to see his "fucking" machine...

SB votes to include the machine on the Board and says that the Board is necessary for ideas to keep folks honest, and to tell them they're fucking up.

LD sees the Board as a mirror, a feedback mechanism, far enough back to keep a different perspective. Ought not to meddle in management. Board will (1) Borrow money (2) Set fiscal policy (3) Help out if Stewart's canoe sinks...

Board members might help sell subscriptions, stuff envelopes and stick on stamps.

Momentary diversion when it is discovered that Board members have not been getting copies of the CQ, that Jan has never even seen the CQ. Andrew Main tears off to get some.

LD. Board members ought to be available for volleyball.

JM. Board shouldn't meddle. She is supportive of Third World interests, their major concern is EMPOWERMENT. From a Third World perspective information is important, as important as money, viable, exciting, active kind of thing, because they don't have access to that kind of information. Granting is nice but dead end if it isn't perpetuating itself.

SB. Actually POINT is a semi-retired foundation. It has more time to speak. Advice dispensing, networking.

LD. POINT knows a system of people, maybe worth keeping the office for $35/month plus phone and answering service to serve as a center for that.

SB. Agrees.

And by the way, CQ staff wants free-lance graphics work. Could use the CQ equipment between productions.

LD. Got to decide on make-up of the Board and authorization for loaning or borrowing money.

JM. Wants to have the entire Board together to decide on adding people.

Jeanne mentions that there is a lot of free publicity just sitting out there waiting for us to use it, and that it's time to take advantage of it. Stewart says that it's time to connect POINT and the CQ in the public eye. Seven Laws has brought POINT and Briarpatch into view.

Andrew M arrives with CQ's - take a break - EAT.

SB. It may be that the CQ doesn't have a function in the direction it's going. The only way to find out is to keep going.

Discussion of details of production costs ensues. I listen and eat and don't write anything down. There is talk of accepting consumer advertising. Andrew Main says that because there is a coherent graphic feeling throughout the CQ, if we accepted advertising from others we would spend more time re-doing their work than it would be worth for the money they would pay.

Jan is about to leave. Louie asks her who she thinks should replace Michael as treasurer. She says she thought that Annie had been suggested before and she liked the idea.

LD. Fine as an interim solution; maybe with a larger Board there would be someone who would act as treasurer with help from Andrea as assistant treasurer since she does the CQ books anyway.

AF. Reminds us that bookkeepers don't necessarily bring financial overview.

LD. Value in Annie serving as interim treasurer partly because she has a good relationship with IRS from whom we haven't gotten final clearance.

AH. Suggests that we keep things the way they are until IRS clearance comes through.

LD. Best to have Board Treasurer and Staff Assistant Treasurer for check and balance.

MP. Board should sell CQ with its existing assets. Sees that we're headed for being out of business in three months. Would change the character of the thing. Try to see to a profit-making entity.

LD. What does this have to do with replacement????

JAN LEAVES.....DICK AND KARIN ARRIVE

Recap for Dick, basically that Michael's projections were based on decreasing costs to 23,000 per quarter; some think that it's better to increase sales and subscription efforts.

SB. Dick would be a good person to liberate the reserve account from Random House; knows Silverman.

DB. Random distributes the Bread Book. Proposes he do an "innocent" act... 'Uh, gee whiz, Mr. Silverman, I wonder if maybe you ought not to be handling the Bread Book since the WEC has had so much trouble getting their money loose from you...Uh, gee whiz!' He will be seeing the fellow early in July.

LD. $60,000 of that money will go to pay Penguin. Then we hope for 45,000 in catalog sales which will carry the debt but will bring in no income

unless catalog sales increase other sales. November 15 will be D-day for paying off the debt. We'll have no useable income in October or November.

NAKED TREASURERS EMERGE FROM HOTTUB

ZEN MASTER GORGES HIMSELF ON TACOS AND STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

DB. Separate publishing from giving away. Define POINT as a publisher.

LD. Rehashes network value of POINT

SB. Changes involving greater coverage hopefully will lead to increased circulation. Recap all the events listed on page one

Discussion about increasing the Board.

SB. How about someone from Penguin?
DB. Why does CQ need a Board
SB. We get lost in details, need them for loans, etc.
DB. Would you call me if there were no Board????

Much talk about people to include on the Board. Consider a "telephone" Board. Stewart would like to see a contributor Board. Dick likes to have his "lips in other people's ears", and makes a dive toward Stewart's,who sinks into the couch to avoid the gesture...but DB thinks it's a little more interesting with bodies.

Trash the idea of having someone from Penguin on the Board.

Michael McClure is a good idea, maybe Ferlinghetti, but his age and interest are questioned, as are Bateson's.

What about women?

Hazel Henderson is a rising star in the east. Maybe her.

Renee, worked for McGraw Hill. Too busy with Neighborhood Foundation.

Stephanie Mills already into it, would be redundant...need folks who aren't already part of the works, new blood.

Maybe McClue and Henderson.

DB. Proposes Stewart, Andrew F., McClure, Henderson and existing Board.

SB. Have Ibeen off a year?

Time for hottub and going home.....

Stewart says he knows why Baker is essential to any Board....CLARITY!!!